

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A method for configuring the software of a USB-compliant server computer of a computer network, comprising the steps of:

5           coupling a communications link between the server computer and a configuration computer, the communications link coupled at a USB port of each of the server computer and the configuration computer;

          establishing data communication between the server computer and the configuration computer through the communications link and the USB ports of the  
10   server computer and configuration computer; and

          communicating data between the server computer and the configuration computer to configure the software of the server computer.

2. The method for configuring the software of a USB-compliant server computer of claim 1, wherein the step of establishing data communication between  
15   the server computer and the configuration computer comprises the steps of,

          transmitting from the configuration computer to the server computer a query concerning the identity of the server computer; and

          receiving from the server computer data indicative of the identity of the server computer.

20       3. The method for configuring the software of a USB-compliant server computer of claim 2, further comprising the step of determining at the configuration computer whether the server computer is a USB-compliant device.

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5 4. The method for configuring the software of a USB-compliant server computer of claim 3, further comprising the step of performing a configuration routine at the configuration computer on the basis of the identity of the server computer to permit the configuration computer to communicate with the server computer if the server computer is determined to be USB-compliant.

5. The method for configuring the software of a USB-compliant server computer of claim 4, further comprising the step of initiating configuration application software at the configuration computer.

10 6. The method for configuring the software of a USB-compliant server computer of claim 5, further comprising the steps of communicating between the configuration computer and the server computer to cause the server computer to initiate configuration application software at the configuration computer to permit data communication between the configuration computer and the server computer.

15 7. The method for configuring the software of a USB-compliant server computer of claim 1, wherein the configuration computer is a portable computer.

8. The method for configuring the software of a USB-compliant server computer of claim 1, wherein the configuration computer is a palmtop computer.

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9. A method for communicating data between a computer and a programmable device, the programmable device including application software able to execute on the programmable device, comprising the steps of:

coupling a communications link between a USB port of the computer  
5 and a USB port of the programmable device;

configuring the computer to communicate with the programmable device as a USB-compliant peripheral device; and

transmitting data between the computer and the programmable device across the communications link according to the USB communications standard.

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10. The method for communicating data between a computer and a programmable device of claim 9, wherein the step of configuring the computer to communicate with the programmable device comprises the steps of:

transmitting from the computer to the programmable device a query  
15 requesting that the programmable device provide USB identification data; and

receiving the USB identification data from the programmable device at the computer.

11. The method for communicating data between a computer and a  
20 programmable device of claim 10, further comprising the step of initiating a USB auto-configure routine at the computer on the basis of USB identification data received from the programmable device.

12. The method for communicating data between a computer and a  
25 programmable device of claim 11, further comprising the step of initiating at the computer application software for configuring software resident at the programmable device.

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13. The method for communicating data between a computer and a programmable device of claim 12, further comprising the step of transmitting a communication between the computer and the programmable device to initiate at the programmable device a software application for the configuration of the  
5 programmable device.

14. The method for communicating data between a computer and a programmable device of claim 9, wherein the programmable device is a server computer.  
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15. The method for communicating data between a computer and a programmable device of claim 9, wherein the programmable device includes,  
a processing unit;  
a memory;  
15 and a USB coupled between the processor and the USB port of the programmable device.

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16. A method for transmitting data between a network device and a computer, comprising the steps of:

coupling a USB link between USB ports of the network device and the computer;

5 receiving from the network device via the communications link USB identification information sufficient to identify the data transfer parameters of the USB device;

configuring the data transfer parameters of the computer in response to the USB identification information received from the network device; and

10 transmitting data between the network device and the computer according to the USB standard.

17. The method for transmitting data between a network device and a computer of claim 16, wherein the step of transmitting data between the network device and the computer includes the step of transmitting data between the network device and the computer to control the operation of the network device.

18. The method for transmitting data between a network device and a computer of claim 17, wherein the network device is a server computer.

19. The method for transmitting data between a network device and a computer of claim 16, wherein the step of transmitting data between the network device and the computer includes the step of transmitting data between the network device and the computer to monitor the operation of the network device.

20. The method for transmitting data between a network device and a computer of claim 19, wherein the network device is headless.

21/ A method for configuring the software of a server computer, the server computer having the ability to transmit data according to a data transmission protocol that accommodates hot-swapping of peripherals and automatic identification of peripherals capability, comprising:

5 coupling a communications link between the server computer and a configuration computer, the communications link coupled at a port of each of the server computer and the configuration computer, the port having the capability of transmitting data according to the data transmission protocol;

10 establishing data communication between the server computer and the configuration computer through communications link and the ports of the server computer and the configuration computer; and

communicating data between the server computer and the configuration computer to configure the software of the server computer.

15 22. The method for configuring the software of the server computer of claim 21, wherein the step of establishing data communication between the server computer and the configuration computer comprises the steps of:

transmitting data from the configuration computer to the server computer a query concerning the identity of the server computer; and

20 receiving from the server computer data indicative of the identity of the server computer.

23. The method for configuring the software of the server computer of claim 22, further comprising the step of determining at the configuration computer  
25 whether the server computer has the ability to transmit data according to the data transmission protocol.

24. The method for configuring the software of the server computer of claim 22, further comprising the step of performing a configuration routine at the  
30 configuration computer on the basis of the identity of the server computer to permit

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the configuration computer to communicate with the server computer if the server computer is determined to have the ability to transmit data according to the data transmission protocol.

25. The method for configuring the software of the server computer of claim 24, further comprising the step of initiating configuration application software at the configuration computer.

26. The method for configuring the software of the server computer of claim 25, further comprising the steps of communicating between the configuration computer and the server computer to cause the server computer to initiate configuration application software at the configuration computer to permit data communication between the configuration computer and the server computer using a graphical user interface.

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